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ABSTRACT

This report contains the Oregon state plan for educating homeless children and youth required by the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. Data on the number and location of homeless children and homeless youth in the state and the barriers they face in obtaining a free public education are discussed. Section 1 provides an overview of the report. Section 2 covers the definitions and sources used to develop the plan. Section 3 covers the demographics of Oregon's homeless children and youth. Section 4 covers the barriers to education for the homeless. Section 6 contains the Oregon state plan. The following steps to address the barriers to school attendance are included in this plan: (1) "Review/Revise State Laws Affecting Homeless"; (2) "Designate State Education Specialist for Homeless"; (3) "Information Campaign"; (4) "Generation of New Data"; (5) "Review of Records Transfer Systems"; and (6) Local Advocacy/Community Networking." A discussion of the narrative of hearings on the plan is included, along with a policy statement on homeless education that was adopted by the State Board of Education in 1989. (JS)

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Education of Homeless Children and Youth

1989

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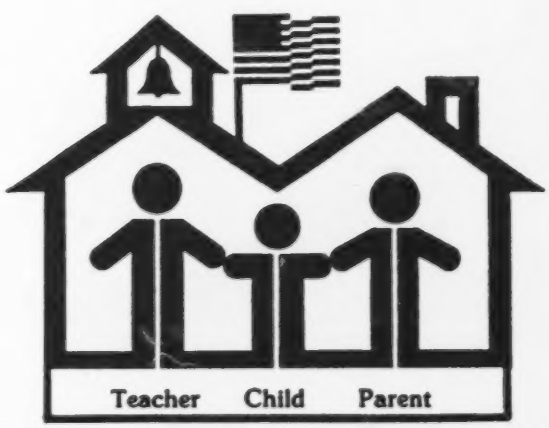

UD 027 330

•Verne A. Duncan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction • Oregon Department of Education, 700 Pringle Parkway SE • Salem, Oregon 97310-0290 •

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTH

Spring 1989

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FOREWORD

The detrimental effects of homelessness on children are becoming well-documented. The lags in physical and emotional development, the prevalence of behavior disorders, fearfulness, lack of self-esteem, and failure to thrive seen in victims of child abuse are also found in homeless children. In Oregon shelters, as elsewhere around the United States, half of the children who are homeless with their families are under five years old. They represent a "time bomb" of extremely disadvantaged children for our public schools. Homeless youth, the teenagers and children unaccompanied by their families in their homelessness, have virtually all dropped out of school. Many have left homes where they were abused. Many are still being abused.

The limited number of programs and services available respond only to basic emergency needs, without provision for remediation and prevention of the devastating long-term effects of homelessness for children and youth. Education, essential as it is for survival in the modern world, loses priority during the life crisis of homelessness. Still, it is important that educators, social service providers, law enforcement officials, business leaders, and other concerned individuals and organizations present a united front to address the barriers to education for homeless children and youth.

These young people will be part of the workforce of the year 2000. Their ability to become productive citizens rests firmly with us. The information presented on the following pages will contribute to efforts to serve these young people. For more information or technical assistance, contact the office of Compensatory Education, 378-3606.

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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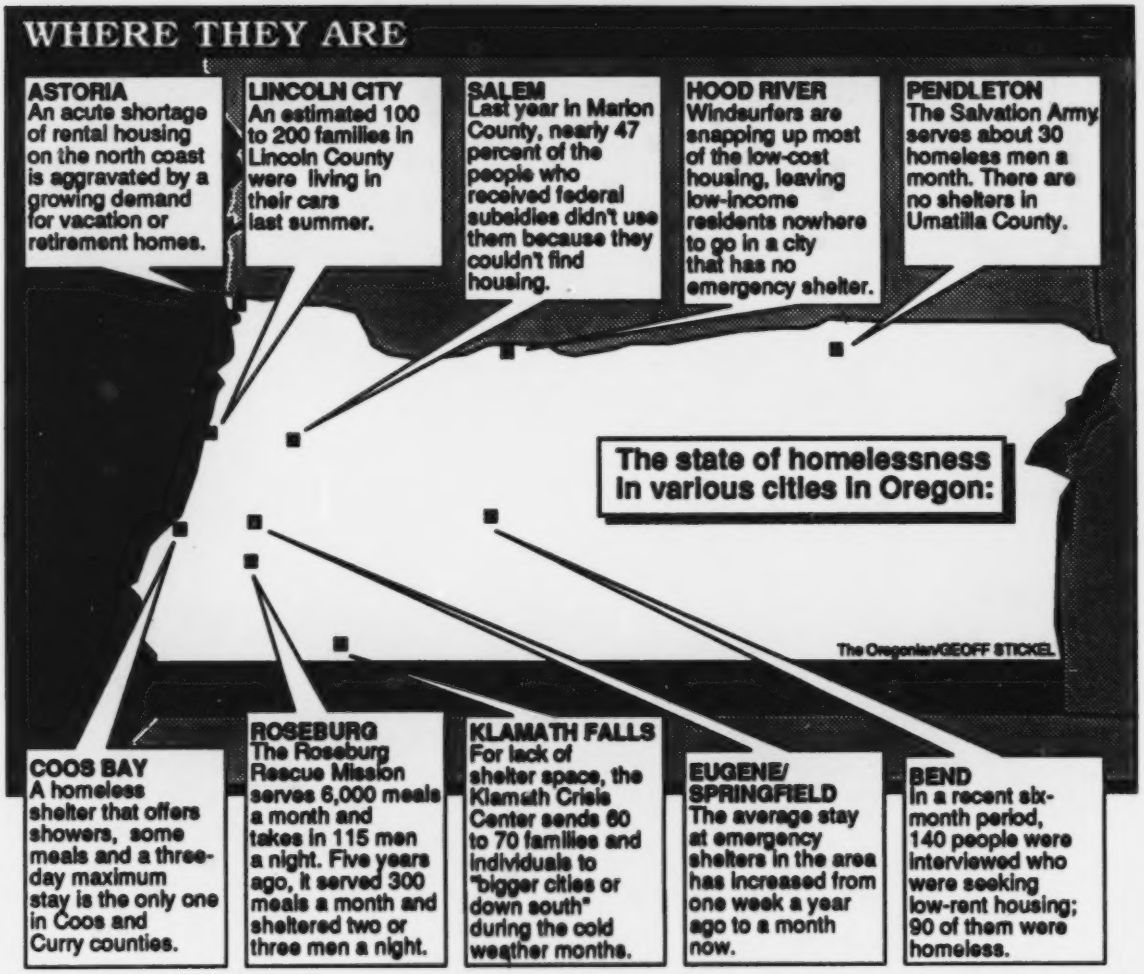
Homeless in Oregon


WHERE THEY ARE
ASTORIA
An acute shortage of rental housing on the north coast is aggravated by a growing demand for vacation or retirement homes.
LINCOLN CITY
An estimated 100 to 200 families in Lincoln County were living in their cars last summer.
SALEM
Last year in Marion County, nearly 47 percent of the people who received federal subsidies didn't use them because they couldn't find housing.
HOOD RIVER
Windsurfers are snapping up most of the low-cost housing, leaving low-income residents nowhere to go in a city that has no emergency shelter.
PENDLETON
The Salvation Army serves about 30 homeless men a month. There are no shelters in Umatilla County.
The state of homelessness in various cities in Oregon:
The Oregonian/GEOFF STICKEL
COOS BAY
A homeless shelter that offers showers, some meals and a three-day maximum stay is the only one in Coos and Curry counties.
ROSEBURG
The Roseburg Rescue Mission serves 6,000 meals a month and takes in 115 men a night. Five years ago, it served 300 meals a month and sheltered two or three men a night.
KLAMATH FALLS
For lack of shelter space, the Klamath Crisis Center sends 60 to 70 families and individuals to "bigger cities or down south" during the cold weather months.
EUGENE/ SPRINGFIELD
The average stay at emergency shelters in the area has increased from one week a year ago to a month now.
BEND
In a recent six-month period, 140 people were interviewed who were seeking low-rent housing; 90 of them were homeless.

Reprinted with permission from the Oregonian, March 19, 1989.

This figure does not include the Portland metropolitan area, where nearly half of Oregon's total homeless population is to be found.

The Oregon Shelter Network estimated 27,000 people were homeless throughout the state of Oregon in 1988 (Oregonian, February 17, 1989).

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

I. OVERVIEW

Introduction

In 1988, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) was awarded a grant under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (the Act) to gather data on the number and location of homeless children and homeless youth in the state and to determine what barriers they face in obtaining a free public education in Oregon. This information was then used toward the development of a State Plan to address those barriers.

Information for this report was compiled from a broad range of sources, including personal consultation with homeless persons and their advocates, local school district personnel and officials in government, social service, and law enforcement agencies throughout Oregon. Media reports and data compiled by other researchers have played an important part in this effort.

Provisions of the Act

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, enacted in July 1987, is an "omnibus" of benefit programs for the homeless.[1] Continuing research and the protection of the rights of the homeless are key features of the Act.

Under Title VII-B of the Act, the State Education Agency

> . . . must ensure that homeless children and youth have access to a free, appropriate public education which would be provided to children of residents of the State and is consistent with State attendance laws. The basic standard is that homeless individuals should have the same access to elementary and secondary education as children whose parents are fully established residents of the State.
>
> If the State has residency requirements as components of its compulsory school attendance laws, it should review and undertake steps to revise those laws to ensure that children of homeless individuals and homeless youth are afforded a free and appropriate public education. State residency requirements should not pose any barriers to the education of homeless individuals.

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[1] Center for Law and Education, Newsnotes, September 1987, p. 1.

II. METHOD

Definitions

The Act defines a homeless individual as:

> one who (1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate residence or (2) has a primary nighttime residence in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings." (Section 103a).

For social service agencies and researchers, the population of homeless young people under consideration is formed of two groups:

> **Homeless Children**--Children who live in families which have become homeless. Service objectives promote keeping the family together throughout its crisis of homelessness.
>
> **Homeless Youth**--Unaccompanied minors without legal means of support; runaways who have left an environment so destructive there is no home to return to. Service objectives promote preparation for independent living.[2]

The great variation in estimates of the homeless population in the U.S. is due in part to differences in definitions and division of research categories. These differences have been acknowledged and compensated for when attempting to combine data, with the intent of providing a clear, multi-faceted picture of the homeless population.

Sources

The ODE contracted for two independent studies to examine the issues and provide a reliable database from which to make statewide assessments of the nature and extent of the homeless population.

Oregon Shelter Network Survey

The Oregon Shelter Network (OSN) surveyed shelter providers and a sample of homeless families and homeless youth, conducting counts on two nights in October 1988. Shelter count data was then used to estimate per-year totals using a generally accepted scientific method which predicts the measured turnover rate in the homeless population to be one month. Percentage estimates of age breakdown among the population were also derived from count data.

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[2] Definition of homeless youth drawn from "Oregon Runaway and Homeless Youth Project," Northwest Network of Runaway and Youth Services, December 1988, p. 8.

OSN survey questions were geared toward determining the characteristics of homeless families and youth and their experiences with the education system, in an effort to arrive at some conclusions as to the barriers faced to school participation.

School District Survey

Officials representing over 75 percent of Oregon's 304 (1988) school districts were surveyed as to district policies and practices regarding the enrollment of homeless children and youth. This open-ended telephone survey also sought to determine the awareness among local school officials of the problems faced by homeless children and youth, and whether the present record transfer system can handle the increasing transiency of students.

Northwest Network of Runaway & Youth Services

Concurrent to the studies contracted for by the ODE, the Oregon members of the NW Network of Runaway & Youth Services (NWN) were conducting a research project through the State Juvenile Services Commission on Oregon's runaway, status offender and homeless youth population, and statewide service availability for these young people. The NWN study provides valuable and timely information on a part of the youth population the education agencies have lost contact with, since this group's drop-out rate is nearly 100 percent.

During the course of their research, the NWN met with regional representatives of local social service and law enforcement agencies involved with homeless and runaway youth. Several of the NWN data collection sessions were audited in the preparation of this report.

Other Sources

- Subcommittee on At-Risk Issues, Oregon Department of Education
- At-Risk Girls Study Group, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, Oregon State Juvenile Services Commission
- "Eggs & Equity," (professionals in education concerned with equity issues), Salem and Portland Chapters
- Salem-Keizer Public Schools At-Risk Student Advisory Group
- TACS--Technical Assistance for Community Services, Portland
- United Way of Columbia-Willamette, Portland
- Marion-Polk League of Women Voters, Salem
- Mano à Mano, for Hispanic Advocacy, Woodburn
- Foundation for Oregon's Housing Future
- Oregon's Agenda for Children, Youth and Families

III. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Demographics

OREGON'S HOMELESS

- The most current and reliable data in Oregon projects indicates there will be nearly 10,000 homeless children and youth in Oregon during 1989. Roughly two-thirds will be homeless with their families; nearly 3,500 of these will be under age five. The other third, homeless youth, are unaccompanied minors under age 18.

These estimates were reached by combining unduplicated data from studies conducted by the OSN and the NWN. The OSN estimate relied on two October 1988 counts of homeless shelter occupancy, factoring in the estimated nonsheltered homeless population, and taking into account a measured turnover rate of one month.[3] The NWN compiled their data from a statewide assessment of service providers and law enforcement data from each county.

It was felt the OSN study provided the better estimate of the number of homeless children (children who are homeless with their families) in the state, while the NWN study better represented the numbers of homeless youth, for whom shelter services are severely limited.

- The homeless population in Oregon is reported to be growing at a rate of ten percent per year.

This estimate was provided in the 1987 Comprehensive Homeless Assistance Plan developed by the Multnomah County Community Development Division.[4] It was substantiated in a study of homelessness in the Greater Salem area, sponsored in 1987 by the League of Women Voters.[5]

- The incidence of homelessness is not confined to the state's urban areas, nor is it limited to people in poverty.

The NWN found homeless youth in all but two rural Oregon counties. Per county estimates are featured in their report. The Salvation Army of Portland reports increasing numbers of homeless children and youth coming from middle to upper class backgrounds.

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[3] The OSN utilized a projection factor reported in Science, March 24, 1987, which reliably estimates overall homeless population from single night shelter count data.

[4] As cited in "Community Profiles," Columbia-Willamette United Way, 1988, p. 110.

[5] "A Study of the Homeless in the Greater Salem Area," League of Women Voters of Marion & Polk Counties, May 1988.

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- Nearly half of the homeless children in Oregon shelters with their families are under five years old.

With the prediction that the total (sheltered and nonsheltered) population of homeless preschool children will approach 3,500 over 1989, Oregon schools must prepare for what the OSN study dubbed a "time bomb" of extremely disadvantaged, often traumatized, young children.

The following observations of the behavior of homeless children ages 2½ to five years, appear in a 1988 report by Bank Street College of Education:

- Short attention span
- Weak impulse control
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Speech delays
- Sleep disorders
- Regressive/toddler-like behaviors
- Inappropriate social interaction with adults
- Immature peer interaction contrasting with strong sibling relationships
- Immature large motor behavior

Upon arrival in kindergarten, these homeless children are typically labelled "delayed," lagging behind "normal" children in areas such as their knowledge of shapes and colors.[6] When compared, the behaviors of homeless children appear similar to those identified in emotionally abused children.[7]

- Families with children comprise the fastest growing segment of the homeless population.

As reported by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 1987, and again in 1989, the face of the American homeless person is changing. The number of homeless women and children has been increasing dramatically.[8] The same holds true in Oregon. According to the OSN survey, all emergency family shelters are operating at capacity. Some shelters report turning away as many as eight to ten families per night.

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6 "Home is Where the Heart Is: The Crisis of Homeless Children and Families in New York City," Bank Street College of Education, March 1988, p. 77.

7 "Making a Difference: A Handbook for Child Care Providers," California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 1987, p. 25.

8 "A Status Report on Homeless Families in America's Cities," 1987 U.S. Conference of Mayors.

A January 1989 report from the Burnside Projects indicated at least 700 families to be homeless each night in the Portland Metro area; this is in addition to an estimated 700 single men and women, also homeless.[9]

- Among homeless families, those headed by single women comprise the largest segment.

Domestic violence is a major contributor to family homelessness. In flight from an abusive spouse, many women choose to seek refuge with their children in emergency shelters. To avoid their abduction, some children are kept out of school. (See Barriers to Education, p. 10 of this report.) Parenting in the stressful context of homelessness is understandably demanding. Family mental health issues involve the depression and anger of parents which accompany homelessness, and how this affects child development.

- The lack of prenatal care among homeless women puts their infants at risk of a plethora of health problems and early infant death.

Infants born into homelessness are at-risk even before taking their first breath.[10] The intergenerational aspects of homelessness are most apparent when teen pregnancy appears in homeless youth. Salem Hospital recently made a request that charity donations include clothing for young women leaving their maternity ward "with nothing but what they came in wearing."[11]

Another concern of the homeless family is the fear by parents that their inability to provide for their children will mean that Children's Services Division will take the children into custody. Such misinformation about the intent of service providers not only hinders delivery of needed services, it may also interfere with the attempts to study or count the homeless, when they are afraid to identify themselves.

Ironically, while state agencies and other service providers maintain that their objectives for homeless families generally promote keeping families together, the State of Oregon is planning to cut two-parent family welfare during 1989. The ramifications of this will become apparent only after the fact, but it can easily be seen how this action will negatively impact both the economic and psychological well-being of many homeless and impoverished families.

These findings represent a critical need for early childhood learning and parent education programs, such as Great Start, to be available and accessible to all homeless families with children. Child-targeted programs alone will not suffice when the entire family is in crisis.

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[9] As per Jean DeMaster, Director, Burnside Project, appearing on "Homeless in Portland," a presentation and discussion featured on Townhall, KATU, Channel 2, Portland.

[10] Op. cit.; Bank Street College of Education, March 1988, p. 37.

[11] As reported by Mid-Willamette Community Action Agency staff, September 1987.

HOMELESS YOUTH

- In 1989, there will be more than 3,500 homeless youth in Oregon.

This estimate is strictly of those youth under age 18 who are unaccompanied by members of their families in their homelessness. Not included in this estimate are runaway youth who have homes to return to and for whom service providers gear their efforts with this in mind. The NWN estimated there to be over 20,000 incidences of runaway youth in Oregon during 1988.

Homeless youth are variously described among those who work with them as "throwaways," "couch people," disenfranchised, disassociated, displaced youth. Many have fled homes where they were sexually or physically abused, others have been forced out of homes where they were unwanted or where they could not be provided for. There are "street kids" in the urban areas, but youth are homeless in the rural areas as well, though not so visible.

"We don't have homeless here," was the concensus among a group of rural school district superintendents, informally polled in October, 1988. Their spokesman, the ESD* superintendent of the county, added that "a homeless teenager would stick out like a sore thumb here." The NWN estimate of homeless youth in that county was 100; another 100 youth were considered runaways. Together, they represented nearly 5 percent of the county's total school enrollment.

But rather than pinpoint the disparities between two bodies of essentially subjective evidence, this information is more useful as another example of why homeless youth are often described as "invisible." Their profoundly high drop-out rate and success in eluding others, such as law enforcement officers and property owners, may contribute to why homeless youth are not encountered by some school officials. And in the case of exploited youth, perhaps they are just being kept out of sight.

- In Douglas County alone, over 200 women under 18 live in exploitive situations with older adult males, unable to return to their own, more dysfunctional, homes. (NWN, 1988)

Youth living with adults in situations in which sex is exchanged for shelter are considered homeless. Homeless youth are prey to those who will lure them into all types of prostitution. A large pornography industry flourishes in the West Coast port city of Portland. Along the I-5 corridor, Portland is known as "Boys Town," popular for its host of teenage male prostitutes. Also among those who seek out homeless youth are recruiters for all manner of cult and gang membership. In these groups, "lost youth" are given a sense of belonging which they previously missed.

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*ESD = education service district

- Outside of Portland, there are virtually no services available for homeless youth (NWN).

The NWN reports that nearly every county has at least one "community house" where homeless youth are known to congregate. The NWN also described an underground network of homeless youth known to operate between the metropolitan area and the coast, involved in the drug trade.

- As many as 60 percent of school district officials surveyed in the fall of 1988 reported that homeless youth were not encountered in their districts, while demographic evidence suggests otherwise.

A common assumption has been that runaway and homeless youth tend to migrate toward the big cities. While this is true to some extent, the NWN found that rural areas such as Lincoln and Coos counties experience equal numbers of "city" youth moving there, attracted to real or imagined drug trade prospects in the coastal ports, or to the potential of jobs in the tourist industry. In truth, many of these youth have become adept at staying "invisible" to truancy and law enforcement officers, and so they often are invisible to those not actively engaged in seeking them out. In 1988, the NWN reported homeless youth in all but two counties: Sherman and Wheeler.

- Even school district officials reporting no homeless in their area identified large numbers of youth "at loose ends," and essentially at risk of becoming homeless. The common denominator among these youth: an unstable home life.

Lincoln County school officials have estimated that nearly one-third of the senior class of one local high school do not live with their families. The assumption is that these youth have left dysfunctional families.

<u>School Enrollment</u>

- When all the data were compiled for this study, it appeared that nearly 4,000 school-age children and youth in Oregon were homeless and not attending school.

The older the homeless child, the less likely he or she is to be enrolled in school. According to the NWN, virtually all homeless youth have dropped out of school. During the crisis of homelessness, school enrollment may not be a primary need. There is much more to consider, however, if, for example, a school lunch is the source of a child's entire daily nutrition.

- In 1988, nearly ten percent of school districts surveyed reported policies which would deny enrollment of homeless children and/or homeless youth under certain circumstances.

Exclusionary policies and/or practices by districts were most often the result of their interpretation of state laws involving district residency and legal guardianship. Since this study began, the ODE has introduced legislation (SB 320) which will help to ensure the enrollment of homeless children and youth in public schools.

- Thirty percent of school districts surveyed reported policies and practices which promote enrollment of homeless children and youth, some despite knowledge they are bearing the burden of students displaced from other districts.

Several districts have exemplary programs of outreach and special support for homeless and at-risk children and youth, but they can respond to only a fraction of the need. Other districts reported being sensitive to the unique educational needs of this population, but unable to address the problem given present budgetary constraints.

- Reports of "shantytowns," "migrant labor camps," "tent cities," etc., were many during the survey period.

Reports on school enrollment of children from these areas were mixed. Some areas are considered dangerous and appear to be avoided by school officials. Others, such as a Willamette Valley RV park cited by one superintendent, seem to be growing as an undesired response to proactive efforts on the part of the district to enroll children from the area in school.

Shelter services, when they exist, are often unsafe for, or unavailable to, homeless youth. Transitional housing, to prepare homeless youth for independent living, is only formally available in Portland. Without services, homeless youth have few legal resorts to their needs for shelter, safety, and sustenance.

The deinstitutionalization* of runaways and status offenders under Oregon law a few years ago has resulted in a lack of services to runaway and homeless youth. Without shelter and other human services, escalating delinquent behavior is often a means of survival, because coming to the attention of the courts may result in service access. Increased drug and alcohol abuse by these youth is nearly always present. Without help, these youth become a risk to their communities, and to themselves, in their potential for victimization.

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*i.e., The scaling down of services by state institutions.

IV. BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

- Homelessness, itself -- the lack of a permanent or extended temporary home, and all the ramifications this life crisis presents -- is the major barrier to education faced by homeless children and youth.

This important finding of the OSN study was reported by Burnside Project director, Jean DeMaster, at the Governor's Conference on Housing in November 1988. Families want to believe that this crisis is only temporary; they are reluctant to enroll their children in districts where there are shelters for what they consider will only be a short stay.[12]

In 1989, there are less than 75 percent of the federal funds that were available for low income housing in 1980. The decline of new housing starts, the elimination of tax credits for building low income housing -- all contribute to the major cause of homelessness in Oregon and across the nation, which is the lack of affordable housing. Oregon's economic recession of 1979-85 resulted in the loss of income for many formerly middle income families, and ultimately contributed to their homelessness. Foreclosures on family homes increased. Children from those families are now found among the homeless children and youth of 1989.

The extent of homelessness increased dramatically in Oregon when the Immigration Reform and Control Act took effect in 1988. Hundreds of families of agricultural workers, here from Mexico for seasonal employment, were forced to live in cars and other substandard environments, while they waited for approval of their immigration status. Children from these families often faced language barriers in addition to other barriers when they were enrolled in schools.

Other barriers to school attendance presented by homelessness include:

- lack of transportation
- lack of suitable clothing
- fear of child abduction by spouse/other
- children needed as translators for parents
- children needed to babysit younger children

Barriers such as these can be dealt with indirectly by education agencies through advocacy, networking, dissemination of information, and outreach into the community (see State Plan, p. 12 of this report).

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[12] Op. cit.; Bank Street College of Education, March 1988, p. 58.

Reported barriers to education of homeless children and youth over which the ODE has direct control:

- Denial of enrollment through misapplication of state laws involving:
  - district residency
  - legal guardianship
  - compulsory attendance
- Delayed enrollment/assessment due to record transfer problems
- Delays due to health exam/immunization requirements

The State Plan for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, which follows, outlines the steps the ODE has determined must be taken to address these barriers to school attendance.

STATE PLAN

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

1. REVIEW/REVISE STATE LAWS AFFECTING HOMELESS

Senate Bill 320 was introduced in the 1989 legislature to ensure that homeless children and youth are not denied school enrollment. The bill, which passed and was signed into law by Governor Goldschmidt on May 29, 1989, "prohibits denial by school district of admission because child has no fixed place of residence (in district) or because child is not under supervision of parent or person in parental relationship." A copy of the bill is included on page 17 of this plan.

Compulsory attendance laws have already undergone similar review and amendment with respect to migrant education. Continued review of district policies will help ensure that homeless students are not adversely affected in any way.

Extended considerations for districts:

A. how "best interest" of child or youth will be determined;

B. maintaining compatibility with policies involving the handicapped, home schooling, Safety Net, athletics, migrant education.

2. DESIGNATE STATE EDUCATION SPECIALIST FOR HOMELESS

The Department has designated a State Specialist for Homeless whose duties include:

Duties:

A. to assist in review and amendment of state laws and district policies to ensure enrollment of homeless students, promote public awareness of this mandate, monitor and enforce compliance;

B. to assist in inter-district arbitration and negotiations involving students (e.g., responsibility for tuition, liability);

C. to participate in inter-state negotiations, (such as those involving transfer of student records), data-sharing and planning;

D. to advocate at the federal level on behalf of the state toward achieving the goals of the State Plan, and to monitor state compliance with the provisions of the McKinney Act;

E. to maintain a database on education, demographics, and other issues involving homeless children and youth.

The At-Risk Subcommittee of the ODE Division of Special Student Services will continue in its role as Departmental advisors to the State Specialist.

3. INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

The State Specialist shall:

A. publish and disseminate State Plan and accompanying research for school officials, shelter networks, and others involved in homeless education;

B. disseminate additional information on the causes of homelessness, the prevalence of homelessness in Oregon, who is at-risk, the availability of resources and advocacy for homeless people, and related topics;

C. promote awareness of "time bomb" potential for school districts with large numbers of homeless pre-school age children;

D. compile information on grant initiatives for model programs, and act as a resource for such incentives;

E. promote the value of children in alliance with other statewide efforts, such as:

- The Governor's Children's Agenda
- Youth 2000
- Student Retention Initiative

4. GENERATION OF NEW DATA

The State Specialist will continue to monitor and maintain state compliance with data collection and reporting requirements on the number and location of homeless children and youth, as set forth in the McKinney Act.

The ODE will support and promote continued research in all areas, particularly:

A. causes and prevention of homelessness;

B. early detection of at-risk students;

C. the unique educational needs of homeless children and youth, as well as those at-risk;

D. the special characteristics and needs of specific homeless populations, such as:

- minorities
- migrants
- young boys
- girls and young women

5. REVIEW OF RECORDS TRANSFER SYSTEMS

More study is indicated on how the system can better deal with records transfers, given the increasingly transient nature of families and youth. It is suggested the ideal system would permit tracking of individuals not only through school, but through their social services contacts as well. It might also work in conjunction with the Student Accounting System.

Existing models for student recordkeeping in Oregon already under consideration:

- MSRTS--Regional migrant tracking system
- SISY--Student Information System (Salem-Keizer)
- OTIS--Oregon Total Information System (private databank, Lane County)
- ORENET--Oregon Computer Network (proposed)
- EDNET--Educational Communications Network

Matters of confidentiality, the coding/labeling of students as "homeless" or "at-risk," the use of pseudonyms, etc., are also at issue.

6. LOCAL ADVOCACY/COMMUNITY NETWORKING

The State Specialist shall act as an information resource and encourage local school districts to form community focus groups and participate in efforts such as:

A. the appointment of a special advocate to work on behalf of the homeless in the enrollment process and accessing local services;

B. determining what services there are for the homeless in their region, as well as how local law enforcement agencies respond to cases of runaway youth, "squatters," etc.;

C. recognizing, supporting, and sharing information on exemplary programs for at-risk and homeless children and youth.

Provisions must be made for districts without staff or funding to meet the special needs of the homeless children and youth within their enrollment. These needs should be brought to the attention of the ODE. Effective means of outreach in communities where homeless children and youth are not enrolling in school are to be explored.

NARRATIVE OF HEARINGS

The ODE State Plan for Education of Homeless Children and Youth was presented before the Oregon State Board of Education in a public hearing, December 8-9, 1988. Among those in attendance were representatives from the Governor's Children's Agenda, the Confederation of School Administrators (COSA), the Oregonian, and the ODE Early Childhood Intervention Program.

Public hearings on SB 320, drafted in response to the State Plan, were held at the State Capitol during the months of February and March 1989, by the Senate Education Committee. It was during these hearings that the only opposition to the State Plan was raised: that amending the law would invite misapplication by non-homeless individuals. The language of the bill was modified, resulting in its unanimous approval by the 1989 legislature. It was signed by the Governor in May 1989 and is now state law.

Regional public hearings on the State Plan were held in Salem in March, and in Southern Oregon in February, 1989. In addition, copies of the State Plan and its accompaniments were widely distributed to service providers, school administrators, advocacy organizations, media, and others involved in homeless education, equity, and research. Comments received were favorable and supportive.

The final State Board of Education hearing on the State Plan was held on March 9, 1989. At this hearing, the Board adopted a policy statement on homeless education, which embodies their support for the State Plan (see next page).

Policy on Education of Homeless Children and Youth,
Adopted by Oregon Board of Education
March 9, 1989

5110 School Attendance of Homeless

The State Board of Education believes that no homeless school-aged child should be denied access to public education and that residency requirements should not be used to bar homeless youngsters from schools. In keeping with this premise:

- *School districts should enroll children and youth who become homeless in either the school district in which the child was previously enrolled or the school district in which the child is actually living, whichever is in the child's best educational interest.*

- *Homeless children who are living with their parents in temporary housing, as well as children whose homeless parents have placed them temporarily with others, should be guaranteed access to school.*

- *School districts should maintain the school records of homeless children so that the records are readily available when the children enter a new school district.*

- *All educational services, such as special education, compensatory education for the disadvantaged, programs for limited-English proficient students, vocational education, programs for the gifted and talented, and school meals should be provided to homeless children on the same basis as these services are provided to nonhomeless students.*

- *Support services such as transportation should be provided to homeless students on the same basis as these services are provided to nonhomeless students.*

Ref: ORS 339.010--School Attendance Required
ORS 339.020--Duty to Send Children to School
ORS 336.168--When Tuition Not Allowed Under 336.165; Hardship Waiver
ORS 336.215--Transfer of Student Records to Other Schools or Districts

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CHAPTER 215

AN ACT SB 320

Relating to admission to schools; amending ORS 327.006 and 339.115.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 339.115 is amended to read:

339.115. (1) Except as provided in ORS 336.165 authorizing tuition for courses not part of the regular school program, the district school board shall admit free of charge to the schools of the district all persons between the ages of 6 and 21 residing therein or all persons between the ages of 5 and 21 residing therein if the district operates a kindergarten program. However, a district school board may admit other nonresident persons, determine who is not a resident of the district and may fix rates of tuition for nonresidents.

(2) Notwithstanding ORS 332.595 (1), a school district shall not exclude from admission a child located in the district solely because the child does not have a fixed place of residence or solely because the child is not under the supervision of a parent, guardian or person in a parental relationship.

[(2)] **(3)** A child entering the first grade during the fall term shall be considered to be six years of age if the sixth birthday of the child occurs on or before September 1. A child entering kindergarten during the fall term shall be considered to be five years of age if the fifth birthday of the child occurs on or before September 1. However, nothing in this section prevents a district school board from admitting free of charge a child who is determined to be academically, socially and physically ready to enter school, as defined by policies of the district school board, to enter school even though the child has not attained the minimum age requirement but is a resident of the district.

[(3)] **(4)** District school boards may provide, by rule, that a resident child eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade at the opening of the fall term, but who does not enter within the first four weeks of such term shall be ineligible to enter school for the remainder of the school year or until another beginning kindergarten or first grade class is organized during that school year. A district school board may waive the requirements of this subsection for disadvantaged children as defined by ORS 343.650.

SECTION 2. ORS 327.006 is amended to read:

327.006. As used in ORS 327.006 to 327.053, 327.059, 327.063 and 327.072 to 327.133:

(1) "Aggregate days membership" means the sum of days present and absent, according to the rules of the State Board of Education, of all resident pupils when school is actually in session during a certain period. The aggregate days membership of kindergarten pupils shall be calculated on the basis of a half-day program.

(2) "Average daily membership" means the aggregate days membership of a school during a certain period divided by the number of days the school was actually in session during the same period. However, if a district school board adopts a class schedule that operates throughout the year for all or any schools in the district, average daily membership shall be computed by the Department of Education so that the resulting average daily membership will not be higher or lower than if the board had not adopted such schedule.

(3) "Capital outlay" means any expenditure by a school district for materials of any sort, except replacements, which increase the value of the school plant or equipment.

(4) "Debt service" means any payment made by a school district as a result of the issuance of bonds or negotiable interest-bearing warrants authorized by the electors of the district.

(5) "Kindergarten" means a kindergarten program that conforms to the standards and rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

(6) "Net operating expenditures" means the sum of expenditures of a school district in kindergarten through grade 12 for administration, instruction, attendance and health services, operation of plant, maintenance of plant, fixed charges and tuition for resident students attending in another district, as determined in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education, but net operating expenditures does not include transportation, food service, student body activities, community services, capital outlay, debt service or expenses incurred for nonresident students.

(7) "Resident pupil" means any pupil whose legal school residence is within the boundaries of a school district reporting the pupil, if the district is legally responsible for the education of the pupil, except that "resident pupil" does not include a pupil who pays tuition or for whom the parent pays tuition or for whom the district does not pay tuition. **"Resident pupil" includes a pupil admitted to a school district under ORS 339.115 (2).**

(8) "Standard school" means a school meeting the standards set by the rules of the State Board of Education.

(9) "Assessed value" means the assessed value of the property within the district, as shown upon the assessment roll as of January 1 of the calendar year in which the last preceding fiscal year of the school district commenced for which a value has been certified pursuant to ORS 311.105. However, where schools for all 12 grades are not operated or provided for by the same district, eight and one-third percent of the assessed value shall be attributed to a district for each grade.

Approved by the Governor May 29, 1989
Filed in the office of Secretary of State May 30, 1989

Teacher Child Parent